

our Nation's history. A President had been assassinated, we were divided by Vietnam, there were riots in our cities over desegregation.

But she understood nature belongs to every single one of us, and we have an obligation to pay nature back. As President Johnson said, when he signed the law:

There is a part of America which was here long before we arrived, and will be here, if we preserve it, long after we depart.

As Mrs. Johnson departs, we thank her for her preservation. We thank her for lining every corner of the country with flowers that we all enjoy.

And we thank her for teaching us that preservation and beauty go beyond the wildflowers, to the need to deal with pollution and urban decay and other problems that are too prevalent in our country and world today.

Jill and I are thinking of her daughters, Lynda and Luci, their families—and, in particular, Senator Robb, who served this body so well.

#### CONGRATULATING CAL RIPKEN, JR.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Madam President, today I honor and congratulate Cal Ripken, Jr., on his induction to the Baseball Hall of Fame. Throughout his storied 21-year career, Cal has been the epitome of an "Iron Man," both on and off the field.

I watched Cal go from being unknown to being the best known baseball player from Baltimore since Babe Ruth. I was there on the last day at Memorial Stadium and the first day at Camden Yards, and I will watch him when he is inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame on July 29.

For we Orioles fans, it was never if we would be celebrating such an amazing feat but when we would be celebrating it. All baseball fans know about "The Streak." We fans remember the victory lap he took around Camden Yards. And the countdown—where the numbers were displayed not just at the Camden Warehouse or in the Baltimore Sun but also at my office in Hart Senate Office building: 2,632 consecutive games, 431 home runs, 19 All-Star game starts, two American League Golden Glove awards, eight Silver Slugger Awards, two American League MVPs, and on and on.

But the most important thing we remember, which the numbers cannot fully reflect, is the strong, dependable presence of Cal—night after night, day after day—through broken bones, through the wide range of emotions and pressures he experienced as a major leaguer, as a father, and as an active citizen in our community. Every game there he was—at third base and shortstop, smiling, and doing his job. And doing it well.

I remember that fateful night when Cal broke Lou Gehrig's long-standing consecutive game record. To see that banner drop from 2130 to 2131, and to hear the admiration and jubilation

from the crowd in Baltimore, was something I will always remember. The sustained cheers were neverending as Cal, urged by Rafael Palmeiro, took a lap around the field. It was a proud night for the Ripken family, for the Orioles, and for Maryland. It was such a magical night. Families from all over came with their kids to celebrate the "Iron Man" and his achievement. The evening had as much dignity as the player himself.

Cal's accomplishments transcend well beyond the baseball field. His character and demeanor is reflected in the success he experiences every day off the field. He shows up and gives maximum effort in every aspect of life. He puts his family above all, he is a consummate community activist and is committed to living and teaching the "Ripken Way."

The "Ripken Way" is simple, really, but its wisdom is enough to build great players and bind generations together. It states: "Keep it Simple, Explain the Why, Celebrate the Individual, and Make it Fun." This style emphasizes clarity and simplicity, while also stressing empathy and interest.

I have certainly used the "Ripken Way" in my life and I believe many Marylanders and Americans also use it. In Maryland, I can tell you the "Ripken Way" is not just on our ballfields. It is in our factories. It is in our homes. It is in the bread we serve our families. It is in our hospitals in Baltimore, where Cal has contributed so much to children in need of hope and a smile. And it is in our hearts today as we salute Cal Ripken, Jr., and this wonderful honor he is receiving.

Cal applies the "Ripken Way" both on and off the ballfield, particularly in his philanthropic work at the Cal Ripken Sr. Foundation. The Cal Ripken Sr. Foundation was established in 2001 in memory of Cal's father. To this day, Cal carries the torch and legacy of his father. It is a legacy that has shaped Cal's life and a legacy that has shaped the entire Orioles' organization.

By emphasizing work ethic, playing by the rules, putting the team first, and showing up every day, the Cal Ripken Sr. Foundation serves disadvantaged youth across the country. The foundation has even built a beautiful state-of-the-art stadium in Aberdeen, MD, where kids can play. Cal has put much of his own money into the foundation and the stadium's construction, while also working to secure private donations.

Cal may be a local boy, but he is no ordinary man. There is no question that Cal has earned his way into the Hall of Fame, the respect of the world, and the admiration of generations to come.

Baltimore may have lost the powerhouse company Bethlehem Steel, but it will always be home to "Iron Man" Cal Ripken, Jr. I congratulate Cal on his stellar career, his strong work ethic, his commitment to family and community, and for the well-deserved, wonder-

ful honor of being inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame.

While he has already achieved so much, I can't help but think that the best is yet to come.

#### CONGRATULATING TONY GWYNN

Mrs. BOXER. Madam President, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Tony Gwynn on his induction into the National Baseball Hall of Fame on July 29, 2007. During an illustrious 20-year career spent entirely with the San Diego Padres, Tony Gwynn was a consummate sportsman whose excellence at the plate earned him the recognition as one of the greatest hitters in the game's long and storied history.

A native Californian, Tony Gwynn was a standout student-athlete at San Diego State University, where he excelled on the school's baseball and basketball teams. Tony remains the only athlete in Western Athletic Conference history to be recognized as an all-conference performer in two sports. His talents on the baseball diamond and the basketball court would lead to his selection by the San Diego Padres and the National Basketball Association's San Diego Clippers on the same day in 1981.

Tony Gwynn made his major league debut on July 19, 1982. Over the course of the next 20 years, he would compile one of the most accomplished resumes in baseball history. A remarkable model of consistency, Tony batted over .300 for 19 consecutive seasons, leading to 3,141 career hits. A 15-time All-Star, he won 8 batting titles during his career, tying the National League record held by Honus Wagner. He is the only player in major league history to win four batting titles in two separate decades. A true all-around player, Tony also won five Gold Glove Awards in recognition of his defensive excellence in the outfield.

In addition to his accomplishments on the field, Tony Gwynn has also been widely recognized for his passion and commitment to make a positive impact in the community. In 1995, he was presented the Branch Rickey Award as the top community activist in Major League Baseball. He received the prestigious Roberto Clemente Man of the Year Award in 1999 for combining sportsmanship and community service with excellence on the field. That same year, he was inducted into the World Sports Humanitarian Hall of Fame in Boise, ID.

Affectionately known as "Mr. Padre," the Padres retired his No. 19 jersey and named the street on which its beautiful downtown stadium is located "Tony Gwynn Drive" in his honor. Judging from his excellence on and off the field, it is clear to see why Tony Gwynn is one of the most admired and beloved sports figures in America.

As his teammates and fans would attest, Tony Gwynn is a deserving inductee into the National Baseball Hall